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MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Letter dated 17 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 14 September 1996 addressed to you by Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq. The letter states that the Iraqi Government has requested the Government of the United Kingdom to communicate to it the results of the interrogation by the authorities in the United Kingdom of the Iraqi nationals who hijacked a Sudanese aircraft and to hand the hijackers over to the Iraqi authorities in accordance with the relevant existing agreements.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 153 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/51/150.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 14 September 1996 from the Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I refer to the hijacking of a Sudanese civilian airliner on 27 August 1996, which was a terrorist crime that the Iraqi Government cannot but condemn. I should like to inform you in this connection that, in accordance with article 6, paragraph 3, of the 1970 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, the Iraqi authorities have requested the United Kingdom's Foreign Office, through the Iraqi interests section of the Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in London, to communicate to them a report on the results of the interrogation by the authorities in the United Kingdom of the Iraqi nationals who carried out the hijacking. The Iraqi authorities have also requested the Foreign Office to hand the hijackers over to them. They have taken this action on a number of grounds: in the first instance, pursuant to article 8, paragraph 1, of the said Convention, which states that "The offence shall be deemed to be included as an extraditable offence in any extradition treaty existing between Contracting States"; in the second instance, pursuant to the provisions of the 1932 Extradition Treaty between the two countries, which, by the inclusion of items 7 and 23 in its article 3, requires that extradition shall be granted for the crime of hijacking; and, in the third instance, in the light of the United Kingdom's consistent policy of publicly declaring in international forums its condemnation of acts of terrorism. On 11 September 1996 the Iraqi interests section in London received a note from the Foreign Office conveying the names of the Iraqi nationals charged with having hijacked the Sudanese aircraft but making no reference to the communication of a report on the investigation or to the extradition of the Iraqi hijackers.

As I inform you of this matter, I am hopeful that the United Kingdom authorities will accede to these two requests as soon as possible so that the competent Iraqi judicial authorities can bring the Iraqi hijackers to trial in accordance with Iraqi law and so that the latter may receive the just punishment they deserve.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 153 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Tariq AZIZ
Deputy Prime Minister
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq